

PEER REVIEW PLAN
RIVER DES PERES- UNIVERSITY CITY BRANCH
GENERAL REEVALUATION REPORT

1. Purpose and Requirements.

a. This document outlines the peer review plan for the River Des Peres- University City General Reevaluation Report. EC 1105-2-408 dated 31 May 2005 “Peer Review of Decision Documents” 1) establishes procedures to ensure the quality and credibility of Corps decision documents by adjusting and supplementing the review process and 2) requires that documents have a peer review plan. The Circular applies to all feasibility studies and reports and any other reports that lead to decision documents that require authorization by Congress. This feasibility report will lead to Congressional Authorization and is therefore covered by the Circular.

b. The Circular outlines the requirement of the two review approaches (independent technical review (ITR) and external peer review (EPR)) and provides guidance on Corps Planning Centers of Expertise (PCX) involvement in the approaches. This document addresses review of the decision document as it pertains to both approaches and planning coordination with the appropriate Center.

(1) ITR. Districts are responsible for reviewing the technical aspects of the decision documents through the ITR approach. ITR is a critical examination by a qualified team that was not involved in the day-to-day technical work that supports the decision document. ITR is intended to confirm that such work was done in accordance with clearly established professional principles, practices, codes, and criteria. In addition to technical review, documents should also be reviewed for their compliance with laws and policy. The Circular also requires that DrChecks (<https://www.projnet.org/projnet/>) be used to document all ITR comments, responses, and associated resolution accomplished.

(2) EPR. The Circular added external peer review to the existing Corps review process. This approach does not replace the standard ITR process. The peer review approach applies in special cases where the magnitude and risk of the project are such that a critical examination by a qualified person outside the Corps is necessary. EPR can also be used where the information is based on novel methods, presents complex interpretation challenges, contains precedent-setting methods or models, or is likely to affect policy decisions that have a significant impact. The degree of independence required for technical review increases as the project magnitude and project risk increase.

(a) Projects with low magnitude and low risk may use a routine ITR.

(b) Projects with either high magnitude/low risk or low magnitude/high risk would require both Corps and outside reviewers on the ITR team to address the portions of the project that cause the project to rate high on the magnitude or risk scale.

(c) Projects with high magnitude and high risk require a routine ITR as well as an EPR.

(3) PCX Coordination. The Circular outlines PCX coordination in conjunction with preparation of the review plan. Districts should prepare the plans in coordination with the appropriate PCX. The Corps PCX are responsible for the accomplishment and quality of ITR and EPR for decision documents covered by the Circular. Centers may conduct the review or manage the review to be conducted by others. Reviews will be assigned to the appropriate Center based on business programs. The Circular outlines alternative procedures to apply to decision documents. Each Center is required to post review plans to its website every three months as well as links to any reports that have been made public. The Office of Water Policy Review (OWPR) will consolidate the lists of all review plans and establish a mechanism for soliciting public feedback on the review plans.

2. **Project Description.**

a. Decision Document. The University City branch of the authorized River Des Peres, Missouri, project is being reevaluated to determine if the project is still economically feasible and environmentally acceptable. The project, as authorized in the Water Resources Development Act of 1990, includes 2.5 miles of channel modifications to reduce flood damages and a streamside recreation trail. Channel modifications as described in the 1988 feasibility report included channel widening and stabilization through riprap lined trapezoidal channels and gabion walls, as appropriate. The feasibility phase of this project is cost shared 75/25 with the project sponsor, University City. This report provides planning, engineering, and implementation details of the recommended plan to allow final design and construction to proceed subsequent to the approval of the plan.

b. General Site Description. The project extends from Purdue Avenue at the entrance to Heman Park to Kempland Avenue in University City, Missouri.

c. Project Scope. The proposed project area is 2.5 miles of channel. The preliminary estimated total project cost is unknown at this time.

d. Product Delivery Team. The product delivery team (PDT) is comprised of those individuals directly involved in the development of the decision document. Contact information and disciplines are listed below.

First	Last	Discipline	Phone	Email
REMOVED	REMOVED	Study Manager/Plan Formulation	REMOVED	<u>REMOVED</u>
REMOVED	REMOVED	Economist	REMOVED	REMOVED
REMOVED	REMOVED	Surveys Specialist	REMOVED	REMOVED
REMOVED	REMOVED	Cost Estimator	REMOVED	REMOVED
REMOVED	REMOVED	Hydraulic Engineer	REMOVED	REMOVED
REMOVED	REMOVED	Geotechnical Engineer	REMOVED	REMOVED
REMOVED	REMOVED	Civil Engineer	REMOVED	REMOVED
REMOVED	REMOVED	Contracting Officer	REMOVED	REMOVED
REMOVED	REMOVED	Biologist	REMOVED	REMOVED
REMOVED	REMOVED	Archaeologist	REMOVED	REMOVED
REMOVED	REMOVED	Real Estate Specialist	REMOVED	REMOVED
REMOVED	REMOVED	Real Estate Appraisal	REMOVED	REMOVED
REMOVED	REMOVED	Structural Engineer	REMOVED	REMOVED
REMOVED	REMOVED	Regulatory Specialist	REMOVED	REMOVED
REMOVED	REMOVED	Office of Counsel	REMOVED	REMOVED

e. Funding. The project is currently funded through General Investigation (GI) funds with a Design agreement with University City.

f. Planning Models. The HEC-1 Hydrologic Model and the HEC Flood Damage Analysis Model (FDA) will be used during the study process. Model certification is not currently required for these models.

g. Vertical Team. The Vertical Team includes MVS management, the MVD District Support Team (DST) and HQ MVD Review Integration Team (RIT) staff as well as members of the Planning of Community of Practice (PCoP). The Acting District Planning Chief is **(REMOVED for web posting)**. DST manager for this project is **(REMOVED for web posting)**. The RIT manager is **(REMOVED for web posting)**. The MVD PCoP contact is **(REMOVED for web posting)**.

3. ITR Plan. As outlined above in paragraph 1.b. (1), the District is responsible for ensuring adequate technical review of decision documents. The responsible PDT District of this decision document is St. Louis District. The ITR District will be identified by the PDT in conjunction with the PCX.

a. General. An ITR Manager shall be designated for the ITR process. The ITR Manager is responsible for providing information necessary for setting up the review, communicating with the Study Manager, providing a summary of critical review comments, collecting grammatical and editorial comments from the ITR team (ITRT), ensuring that the ITRT has adequate funding to perform the review, facilitating the resolution of the comments, and certifying that the ITR has been conducted and resolved in accordance with policy. The ITR Manager shall be employed outside of MVD and its districts.

b. Team. The ITRT (not yet selected) will be comprised of individuals that have not been involved in the development of the decision document and will be chosen based on expertise, experience, and/or skills. The members will roughly mirror the composition of the PDT. MVS, in coordination with the PCX for Flood Risk Management, will identify ITRT members. The ITR team member for cost engineering will be obtained through the Walla Walla District. Other members of the ITRT and their areas of expertise are projected as follows:

First	Last	Discipline	Phone	Email
		ITR Manager/plan formulation		@usace.army.mil
		Civil design		@usace.army.mil
		Biology/NEPA		@usace.army.mil
		Hydraulics/hydrology		@usace.army.mil
		Socio-economics		@usace.army.mil
		Cost engineering (Walla Walla District)		@NWW.usace.army.mil
		Real estate/Lands		@usace.army.mil
		Cultural resources		@usace.army.mil
		Geotechnical engineering		@usace.army.mil

c. Communication. The communication plan for the ITR is as follows:

(1) The team will use DrChecks to document the ITR process. The Study Manager will facilitate the creation of a project portfolio in the system to allow access by all PDT and ITRT members. An electronic version of the draft report and appendices in Word format shall be posted at: <ftp://ftp.usace.army.mil/pub/> at least one business day prior to the start of the comment period.

(2) The PDT shall send each ITRT member one hard copy (with color pages as applicable) of the draft report and appendices such that the copies are received at least one business day prior to the start of the comment period.

(3) The PDT shall host an ITR kick-off meeting virtually to orient the ITRT during the first week of the comment period. If funds are not available for an on-site meeting, the

PDT shall provide a presentation about the project, including photos of the site, for the team.

(4) The Study Manager shall inform the ITR manager when all responses have been entered into DrChecks and conduct an in progress review to summarize comment responses.

(5). A revised electronic version of the report and appendices with comments incorporated shall be posted at <ftp://ftp.usace.army.mil/pub/> for use during back checking of the comments.

(6) Team members shall contact ITRT members or leader as appropriate to seek clarification of a comment's intent or provide clarification of information in the report. Discussions shall occur outside of DrChecks but a summary of discussions may be provided in the system.

(7) Reviewers will be encouraged to contact PDT members directly via email or phone to clarify any confusion. DrChecks shall not be used to post questions needed for clarification.

(8) The ITRT, PDT, and vertical team shall conduct an after action review (AAR) no later than two weeks after the policy guidance memo is received.

d. Funding.

(1) The PDT district shall provide labor funding by cross charge labor codes. Funding for travel, if needed, will be provided through government order. The Study Manager will work with the ITR manager to ensure that adequate funding is available and is commensurate with the level of review needed. The current cost estimate for this review is between \$15,000 and \$20,000. Any funding shortages will be negotiated on a case by case basis and in advance of a negative charge occurring.

(2) The ITR manager shall provide organization codes for each team members and a responsible financial point of contact (CEFMS responsible employee) for creation of labor codes.

(3) Reviewers shall monitor individual labor code balances and alert the ITRT Study Manager to any possible funding shortages.

e. Timing and Schedule.

(1) The pre-AFB ITR is tentatively scheduled for February 2009 and will utilize the ITR team identified in Section 3b. above. The AFB is tentatively scheduled for May 2009.

(2) The ITR of the draft report (post AFB) will begin once a recommended plan has been selected, the preliminary design is complete, and the environmental assessment has been performed.

(3) The PDT will hold a “page-turn” session to review the draft report to ensure consistency across the disciplines and resolve any issues prior to the start of ITR. Writer/editor services will be performed on the draft prior to ITR as well.

(4) The ITR process for this document will follow the timeline below. Actual dates will be scheduled once the period draws closer. It is estimated that review of this document will be begin in the 3rd Quarter of FY 2009.

Task	Date
Comment period begin	Week 1
Kickoff meeting	Week 1
ITR Comments due	Week 4
PDT Responses due	Week 6
Responses Backcheck	Week 8
Certification	Week 10
Alternative Formulation Briefing (AFB)	Week 14
AFB Policy Memo Issued	Week 18
After Action Review	NLT Week 20

f. Review.

(1) ITR Team responsibilities are as follows:

(a) Reviewers shall review the draft report to confirm that work was done in accordance with established professional principles, practices, codes, and criteria and for compliance with laws and policy. Comments on the report shall be submitted into DrChecks.

(b) Reviewers shall pay particular attention to one’s discipline but may also comment on other aspects as appropriate. Reviewers that do not have any significant comments pertaining to their assigned discipline shall provide a comment stating this.

(c) Grammatical and editorial comments shall not be submitted into DrChecks. Comments should be submitted to ITR manager via electronic mail using tracked changes feature in the Word document or as a hard copy mark-up. The ITR manager shall provide these comments to the Study Manager.

(d) Review comments shall contain these principal elements:

- A clear statement of the concern
- The basis for the concern, such as law, policy, or guidance
- Significance for the concern

- Specific actions needed to resolve the comment

(e) The “Critical” comment flag in DrChecks shall not be used unless the comment is discussed with the ITR manager and/or the Study Manager first.

(2) PDT Team responsibilities are as follows:

(a) The team shall review comments provided by the ITRT in DrChecks and provide responses to each comment using “*Concur*”, “*Non-Concur*”, or “*For Information Only*”. *Concur* responses shall state what action was taken and provide revised text from the report if applicable. *Non-Concur* responses shall state the basis for the disagreement or clarification of the concern and suggest actions to negotiate the closure of the comment.

(b) Team members shall contact the PDT and ITRT managers to discuss any “non-concur” responses prior to submission.

g. Resolution.

(1) Reviewers shall back check PDT responses to the review comments and either close the comment or attempt to resolve any disagreements. Conference calls shall be used to resolve any conflicting comments and responses.

(2) Reviewers may “agree to disagree” with any comment response and close the comment with a detailed explanation. ITRT members shall keep the ITR manager informed of problematic comments. The vertical team will be informed of any policy variations or other issues that may cause concern during Headquarter review.

h. Certification. To fully document the ITR process, a statement of technical review will be prepared. Certification by the ITR manager and the Study Manager will occur once issues raised by the reviewers have been addressed to the review team’s satisfaction. Indication of this concurrence will be documented by the signing of a certification statement (Appendix A). A summary report of all comments and responses will follow the statement and accompany the report throughout the report approval process.

i. Alternative Formulation Briefing (AFB). The AFB for this project will occur after ITR certification. It is possible that the briefing will result in additional technical or policy comments for resolution. After resolution of significant comments, the ITR will be re-certified, if needed.

4. EPR Plan.

a. This decision document will present the details of a feasibility study undertaken to reduce flood damages around the University City branch of the River des Peres as described in paragraph 2 above. In accordance with the paragraphs below, this project does not meet the EPR standards outlined in the Circular.

(1) Project Magnitude. The magnitude of this project is determined as low. The cost of the project will not likely exceed \$25 million. It is assumed that the amount of benefits accruing to the project will justify its cost. The scale of the project is limited because the project construction footprint will be limited to approximately 2.5 miles of the River Des Peres. The project involves Flood Risk Management of a highly urbanized area. The project will have positive long term and cumulative effects.

(2) Project Risk. This project is considered average risk overall. The potential for failure is low because this project is primarily a channel improvement plan with little chances/reasons for failure. The certainty of the project delivering the projected FRM benefits is fairly high. The approaches being examined are neither novel nor precedent setting. Regardless of the implemented plan, flooding will still occur along the densely populated areas of the river. The potential for controversy regarding project implementation is average because the recommended plan will impact landowners in the area and there is the potential for flooding after project construction. Buyouts will also be examined as one potential alternative. Environmental impacts are expected to be limited. A socio-economic analysis will be prepared and at least one public meeting will be held.

(3) For the foregoing reasons, a separate EPR for this decision document is not recommended. This determination has been coordinated with the vertical team and they concur.

5. Public and Agency Review.

a. Public review of the document will occur after issuance of the AFB policy guidance memo and concurrence by HQUSACE that the document is ready for public release. As such, public comments other than those provided at any public meetings held during the planning process will not be available to the review team for the AFB review.

b. Public review of this document will begin approximately one month after the completion of the ITR process and policy guidance memo. The period will last 30 days as required by law.

c. The public review of necessary State or Federal permits will also take place during this period.

d. A formal State and Agency review will occur concurrently with the public review. However, it is anticipated that intensive coordination with these agencies will have occurred concurrent with the planning process.

e. Upon completion of the review period, comments will be consolidated in a matrix and addressed, if needed. A comment resolution meeting will take place if needed to decide upon the best resolution of comments. A summary of the comments and resolutions will be included in the document.

6. PCX coordination. The appropriate PCX for this document is the Flood Risk Management Planning Center of Expertise located at SPD. The PCX Director and Deputy Director are Mark Charlton and Eric Thaut, respectively. This review plan has been submitted through the PDT District (MVS) Planning Chief, to the PCX Director for review. The PRP is approved at MVD after appropriate coordination/discussions between MVS, PCX, and MVD. Since it was determined that this project is low magnitude and average to low risk, EPR will not be required. The PCX is requested to either assist in the assignment of an ITR team as proposed in paragraph 3.b. above or advise MVS to acquire its own ITR manager from a district outside of MVD. The approved review plan will be posted to the PCX website. Any public comments on the review plan will be collected by the Office of Water Policy Review (OWPR) and provided to MVS for resolution and incorporation if needed.

7. Approvals. The PDT will carry out the review plan as described. The Study Manager will submit the plan to the MVS Planning Chief for review and coordination with PCX. The Commander of MVD retains final approval authority for the Peer Review Plan.

**APPENDIX A
STATEMENT OF TECHNICAL REVIEW**

**COMPLETION OF INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL REVIEW
RIVER DES PERES, UNIVERSITY CITY GENERAL REEVALUATION REPORT
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT
WITH INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
AND APPENDICES**

St. Louis District has completed the project implementation report (feasibility report) of the River Des Peres, University City General Reevaluation Report. Notice is hereby given that an independent technical review, that is appropriate to the level of risk and complexity inherent in the project, has been conducted as defined in the Review Plan. During the independent technical review, compliance with established policy principles and procedures, utilizing justified and valid assumptions, was verified. This included review of: assumptions, methods, procedures, and material used in analyses; alternatives evaluated; the appropriateness of data used and level obtained; and reasonableness of the result, including whether the product meets the customer's needs consistent with law and existing Corps policy. The independent technical review was accomplished by an independent team composed of XXX District staff. All comments resulting from ITR have been resolved.

Team Leader, University City- River Des
Peres Independent Technical Review Team

Date

Study Manager, University City, River
Des Peres Project

Date

CERTIFICATION OF INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL REVIEW

A summary of all comments and responses are attached. Significant concerns and the explanation of the resolution are as follows:

(Describe the major technical concerns, possible impact and resolution)

As noted above, all concerns resulting from the independent technical review of the project have been fully resolved.

Chief, Planning and Policy Branch
St. Louis District

Date